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DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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September 16, 1997

TO: Minerals File

FROM: D. Wayne Hedberg, Permit Supervisor

RE: Site Inspection, USMX of Utah, Inc., Goldstrike Mine, M/053/005, Washington County, Utah

Date of Inspection: August 28, 1997
Time of Inspection: 10:00am - 3:30pm
Conditions: Sunny and warm
Participants: Doug Jensen, USMX; Larry Gore, BLM; Lynn Kunzler and Wayne Hedberg, DOGM

Purpose of Inspection: To evaluate the operator's request for a reduction in surety based upon performance of reclamation at the Goldstrike Mine.

Division and BLM representatives stopped first at the Beavertail Pit location to evaluate the reclamation and revegetation conditions, before meeting Doug Jensen at the Goldstrike mine office. Portions of the outslope of the (northwest-facing) regraded slope below the main access road leading into the Beavertail Pit area (section AA, reclamation treatments map, sheet 1 of 4??) showed marginal revegetation success. It was questionable if this portion had received any topsoil as the surface appeared to be principally composed of wasterock. Russian thistle was the primary vegetation growing in this location. The other disturbed areas associated with the Beavertail Pit showed varying levels of vegetative success, with the upper most (southerly) sections of the pit showing the highest cover, diversity and density. The following species were noted: Yellow sweetclover, globemallow, fourwing saltbush (some plants 4-5 feet tall!), small burnet, bromegrass, and rabbitbrush. No significant erosional problems were noted. It was jointly decided that the vegetation success standard was achieved for most of the Beavertail Pit area with the exception of the access road outslopes mentioned above. Doug Jensen later agreed that roughly 6-7 acres in this area need to be redone, which involves the access road and outslopes. Several photos were taken of the area.

We proceeded to the mine office next and met with Doug Jensen. Doug indicated that the effluent discharging from heaps #1 and #2 has dropped to approximately 2.2 gpm and 17 gpm respectively. He stated that about once every 3 weeks they are having to pump roughly 200,000 gallons of effluent back onto heap #2. He also stated that the new owner (Dakota Mining) has abandoned the use of the bio-reactor as a means of treating the effluent discharging from the heaps. They are presently exploring the possibility of using natural attenuation via direct land application as a treatment method. He stated that recent soil samples had been taken from the backfilled Hamburg Pit for laboratory analysis.

Pad #1 was inspected next to evaluate the conditions of vegetation success. Doug said that he had broadcast seeded the backside and upper portions of the regraded heap last September (1996) with some left over seed he had onsite. Forage kochia, Russian thistle, fourwing, western and intermediate wheatgrass, yellow sweet clover, alfalfa, crested wheatgrass and globe mallow were observed growing on the heap. Russian thistle and kochia were the primary species noted on the southwest facing slope. Evidence of some rilling and minor gullying was also noted on this southwest slope. Final contouring, ripping and seeding have not occurred on the majority of this heap to date. We strongly encouraged Doug to actively pursue completing the final reclamation of the heap this fall.

We next inspected the Padre Pit area. The vegetation looked good. Doug indicated that approximately 2 years has passed since the site was seeded last. Some of the species noted included: small burnet, palmer penstemon, yellow sweetclover, alfalfa, fourwing saltbush, forage kochia, bitterbrush, smooth brome, some crested wheatgrass and a fair amount of intermediate wheatgrass. A series of photos were taken to document the conditions at this location. North Mining Company had just recently drilled an exploration hole in this area. We noted one plugged drill hole on the upper access road to the pit which had not been reclaimed yet. A second drill hole location was flagged on the backside (east?) of Heap #2. This site had not been drilled yet. North Mining Company was onsite drilling another hole in the Hamburg Pit area during our inspection.

The facilities/plant site area was evaluated next. The operator is asking for a release of 35% of the reclamation bond being retained for this area. Doug stated that approximately 6 acres of disturbance remain to be reclaimed here. The harsh, dry, southwest facing outslopes below the plant site have achieved marginal vegetation success thus far. The principal species noted include: yellow sweetclover, forage kochia, alfalfa, Russian thistle, intermediate wheatgrass, and fourwing saltbush. Several photos were taken to document onsite conditions. It was decided by the BLM and DOGM that a 25% surety release may be more appropriate for this site at this time.

The Moosehead Dump area was inspected next. Species diversity and density varied across the site, being heavier and more diverse in the lower (more westerly) section. The upper (more easterly) sections appeared somewhat drier and harsher which could attribute to the lower level of vegetation success. Species noted in the upper (harsher) area included: alfalfa, yellow sweetclover (somewhat heavy), palmer penstemon, forage kochia, kochia, Russian thistle, Indian ricegrass, small burnet, intermediate wheatgrass, and smooth brome. Species noted in the lower dump area (appeared to have more or better topsoil here) included all of the above with a thick predominant cover of fourwing saltbush. Diversity and density again tended to drop off as one proceeds over the western outslope/edge of the regraded dump into the adjacent drainage.

The final site inspected was the bottom of the partially backfilled Moosehead Pit. Doug indicated it has been three years since this area was seeded. Principal species noted included: fourwing saltbush, palmer penstemon, intermediate wheatgrass, alfalfa, small burnet, bitterbrush and a small amount of orchard grass. The vegetation appeared adequate to meet the vegetation standard. Several photos were taken to document the conditions in the pit area.

jb
cc: Larry Gore, BLM
Doug Jensen, USMX of Utah, Inc.
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